

GIPSEYS OF GRANADA.

From an Unpublished Work,

[BY THE AUTHOR OF "A YEAR IN SPAIN."]

CERVANTES begins his beautiful novel of the Gitanilla, in which he illustrates the pranks of the Gipseys, with the following not very flattering exordium: "It would seem that the Gitanos and Gitanas were solely born into the world to fill the station of thieves. They are brought up among thieves; they study the profession of thieves, and finally end by becoming thieves, the most current and thorough-paced on the face of the earth." The history of our species furnishes no study more singular than that of this unaccountable race, which, emigrating from the east, overran the whole of Europe, and pushed its way onward, not by the force of the sword, but by begging and stealing; and at the same time that they conformed in some particulars of dress, manners, customs, and religion, to the countries in which they settled, in others retained every where a common character, common propensities, and common occupations.

The Gipseys are found in no part of Spain except Andalusia, which, in their soft and lisping Spanish, they call *la tierra de Dios—la tierra de Maria Santisima*—the land of God—the land of the most holy Virgin. They either live in the ruinous purlieus of the great cities, or else wander from place to place, the women carrying their children naked, slung from their shoulders, or dangling with one arm around them upon their hips. In Andalusia, as elsewhere, they gain their bread by tinkering, stealing, and fortune telling; and preserve the common tradition of an Egyptian descent. It is in Granada, however, that they most abound, just as the skippers are found in greatest numbers in the best cheese. They have their habitations in the caves of the Albaycin, where they practice little arts in lock and spoon making and basket work, their commodities having the common reputation of being worthless and catch-penny. To vend them, they take their stations in the Vivarambla, where they may always be seen seated at the shady side of the square, and never shifting their births until dislodged by the sun. Their chief revenue, however, arises from shaving their favorite water dogs, of which there is one in almost every family; and I have often been amused at seeing the four paws of one of these animals, as he impatiently sub-

mitted to this process of decoration, held by as many young Gipseys in as many different directions, whilst the old crone their mother divested him of his fleece. These people are almost universally tall and well made, their figures and carriage having in a rare degree the air of freedom and unconstraint. The women are very beautiful, their features, as well as those of the men, being very regular; with an Asiatic complexion and cast of countenance; long, straight, and very black hair; full dark eyes, and teeth of pearly whiteness. They are all fond of appearing in the worn out finery of the Andalusian dandies, and have a taste for elegance, though it be even in rags. Their pranks are often exhibited on the Spanish stage to the great delight of the audience, who receive their quaint practical jokes and less innocent rogueries with the greatest glee. Indeed they have the character of being a light hearted and happy race, and, notwithstanding their vicious propensities, are looked on with an extra share of that indulgence which is extended to vagrants of all classes in Spain.

There is much in the cast of countenance, complexion, and unfettered conformation of these Gipseys, in connection with their mendicant air and the distinctness of their appearance, character, and sympathies, from those of the Spaniards around them, to remind an American of the vagrant Indians whom he has seen loitering about the frontier settlements of his native country. The Gipseys of Spain do not, however, excite the same sympathy as our unhappy aborigines. They came to that country of their own accord, and with a view to better their condition, bringing their vices with them, and making them instrumental to self support and to the preservation of their identity. But the Indians, instead of dispossessing, are the dispossessed; their degradation, instead of being derived from their savage state, has supplanted the wild virtues that adorned it, and is at once the result of civilized encroachment and the efficient cause of their ruin.

It was in order to see something of the domestic economy of this strange race, of whom we daily met many in the streets of Granada, that we one morning took a walk to the caves of the Albaycin, where they have their subterranean habitations. Crossing the ravine of the Daro, and passing through the more populous portion of the Albaycin, whose houses are often incorporated with the ruins of walls, that mark the gradual expansion of Granada, as it augmented its population in the days of the Saracens, we began at length to ascend the more

precipitous portion of the rival mountain, where it looks towards the valley of the Daro and the fortress of the Alhambra. The Albaycin may be called the rival of the Alhambra, not only from its position immediately opposite, the two mountains being drawn up on either side of the Daro, and frowning upon each other, the Pillars of Hercules in miniature; but because in Moorish days it was crowned with a fortress of nearly equal strength, which sometimes arrayed itself in hostility. When two kings reigned not only in the same kingdom, but in the single city of Granada, it was the fortress of the Albaycin that formed the court and strong hold of Boabdil el Chico. Of this fortress scarce a vestige now remains; it doubtless dates its demolition from the period when, after the conquest, the Moriscos were compelled to take up their abode within the precincts of the Albaycin.

As we went on ascending, the streets of the Albaycin passed gradually into zig-zag pathways winding their way up the acclivity; and the houses rising above each other along the hill side, gave place to caves artificially hollowed beneath the surface of the earth. The whole superior part of the mountain was perforated like a honeycomb, and contained within its bowels a numerous population, of which, however, none of the ordinary indications could be discovered, except the wreaths of thin smoke which rose in every direction, curling among the prickly-pear bushes, which covered the whole surface, and furnished food to the poor inhabitants who lived below. At one of the first caves we managed an invitation to walk in, by asking a decent old woman for some water. When within the door, and we began to recover our sight, we found ourselves in an apartment of regular figure, and wanting in none of the comforts of life. A fire-place stood in front of the entrance, its chimney being perforated upwards through the rock. On the right was the door of the principal bed-room; it had a circular window or loop hole, was very clean and neat, and was ornamented with crosses, artificial flowers, and rude paintings of the saints. There were other apartments penetrating farther into the recesses of the mountain, and which received no light from without; these served for sleeping chambers and store rooms. The rock here, like that of the adjoining mountain, which contains the Mazmorras, is of a soft nature and is easily cut, but hardens by exposure to the air. The caves that are hewn in it are more comfortable than the ordinary habitations of the poor, keep out the weather effectually, and

being less subject to changes of temperature, are comparatively warm in winter and cool in summer.

Taking leave of our old woman and her cave, we proceeded eastward along the atclivity, until we found ourselves among the more wretched of these subterranean dwellings, the fit abode of Gipseys, vagabonds, and robbers. Having singled out one which we supposed to belong to the first of these honorable classes, from a group of tawny and more than half naked children, whom we found at their gambols before the door, we took the liberty of entering it, after the utterance of an *ave maria purissima*. We found no one within but a young Gipsey girl, seated on the stone floor, surrounded by a litter of straw, which she was sleepily weaving into braid for a bonnet. Beside her was a wild, shaggy dog, which, like those of our Indians, seemed to have adapted himself to the strange life of his masters, and gone back to his original and wolf-like condition. The dog is an accommodating animal; not only in manners, habits, and character, but even in appearance, he learns to assimilate himself to his owner. The dog of a prince takes something of a prince's pomposity; the butcher's dog shares in the butcher's fierceness; the dog of a thief may be easily known by his skulking, hang-gallows air; and that of the poor beggar learns to look as humble and imploring as his master. The theory may fail as often as any other theory; but at all events it applied to the treacherous cur, who now growled at our intrusion, until it was sanctioned by his mistress; when, though he ceased his menacings, he took his station beside her, and still kept a watchful and lowering eye upon us. The young women too seemed embarrassed by our presence; and when we would have had our fortunes told by her, she pleaded ignorance, bade us come when her mother should be there, and appeared willing to be rid of us. Ere we relieved her of our presence, we had time to remark that, though neither very clean nor very tidy, she was yet pretty as Preciosa herself. Her features were regular and expressive, with glowing eyes, and a form finely moulded and unperverted by artificial embarrassments. She had moreover a modest look, and seemed to justify the idea, that chastity could exist, as it is said to do, in so humble and unfettered a condition. Indeed, whatever may be the vices of the Spanish Gipseys, Cervantes tells us that they respect this virtue both in their wives and damsels, forming none but permanent connexions, which, though not sanctioned by matrimony, are only

broken by common consent. He gives them credit too for assuming, in an eminent degree towards each other, the laws and obligations of friendship. They do not take the trouble to pursue crimes committed among them before the tribunals of the country; but, like many others in Spain who are not Gipseys, execute justice on their own account.

MEMOIR OF ROBERT C. SANDS.

Since the first pages of this Magazine were in type, one upon whom reliance was placed for many valuable contributions to its pages, an author of high merit, "a scholar and a ripe and good one," devoted to literary pursuits with an ardor and a constancy rare among our countrymen, and of a temper and disposition amiable and excellent beyond that of most men, has been called away from us. Such an intellect should not be suffered to depart without notice, and in this article it is proposed to sketch briefly his life and character.

ROBERT C. SANDS was born in New-York on the eleventh of May, 1799. He was the son of Comfort Sands, Esq. for many years an eminent merchant of that city, who is honorably mentioned in Sparks's *Life of Ledyard*, as a liberal patron of that intrepid traveler, and who, during the events of the revolution had distinguished himself by his zeal and activity in the cause of liberty. Young Sands was noted in early life for his quickness of intellect and his facility in acquiring knowledge. At seven years of age he began the study of Latin in the school of Mr. Rose, at Brooklyn, on Long Island. At a subsequent period he pursued his classical studies under the instructions of Mr. Findlay, at the beautiful village of Newark, in the state of New-Jersey. It was Mr. Findlay, as he frequently remarked, who succeeded in inspiring him with a taste for the works of Virgil, which was never lost in the midst of all the various occupations in which he afterwards engaged. The *Æneid* was his refreshment when wearied by severer studies; and to the last day of his life it was a common practice with him, whenever he wished to kindle his imagination, or awaken the intellectual glow favorable to eloquent composition, to read a few pages of the rich harmonies of the Mantuan poet.

He was afterwards placed under the care of the Rev.

LODGINGS AT ZARAGOZA.

From a Manuscript Work.

[BY A TRAVELLER IN SPAIN.]

THE inn at which I found myself established at Zaragoza, though called the best in the place, was a very sorry affair. It was a large ruinous old house, which doubtless in its better days had been the mansion of some family of wealth and dignity, but had now come to the base uses of a common inn, an emblem perhaps of the fortunes of its once lordly tenants, who may have fallen too from former magnificence into poverty and neglect. Its present occupants were sluttish people, who left the great porch and stairway unswept by day and in gloomy darkness by night, while the chambers and the table accorded but too well with the other arrangements of the careless wife of the host, a woman of slovenly attire, unwinning person, and a shrill voice, that was often heard ringing ill-naturedly from the kitchen to the garret.

The rooms of this cheerless domicile had such a desolate air, that for the sake of companionship in misery, I took a large wo-begone apartment with one of my fellow passengers of the diligence; whom, though I have nothing to say in his praise, I will nevertheless introduce to the acquaintance of the reader. Don Ambrosio Salsereta was a withered, sallow, wrinkled little man, who counted some fifty-five winters, but had the face and figure of a man much more advanced in life. Had I been a better physiognomist, I might have discovered a victim of one of the most fatal passions, in the bloodless parchment complexion, in the reddened eye, the anxious countenance, the trembling hand, the thin gray hair, the broken form, and the general aspect of premature decay and exhaustion. But these are sometimes the symptoms of the innocent prey of disease or misfortune; and perhaps it was not surprising that one still young in the world, should not have been able to make the distinction. Don Ambrosio, as I afterwards learned from his own story, and principally from other sources, was born to a good estate and grew up a boy of lively mercurial temperament, more fond of pastimes than study, and of a disposition that rejected control. When he came to the proper age, he was sent to the university of Salamanca, where the idle school-boy was readily recognized in the careless student. He soon found that philosophy had no charms, that law was a pest, and

metaphysics an utter abomination, to a man of spirit and fortune. Besides to have pestered his brains with these quirks and subtleties, would have been an idle waste of trouble to one who had highborn friends at Salamanca. By their influence he was carried triumphantly through the horrors of examinations; and came forth full fledged at the end of his career, a very Aristotle in philosophy, a Cicero in latinity, and a Justinian in jurisprudence, without having once troubled his head about the matter.

Emerging from the cobweb halls of Salamanca with all these ready-made accomplishments, he soon found himself in the possession of his long expected estate, and the gay 'world all before him where to choose.' For a man of wealth and spirit to languish in the dullness of a provincial town, or in the sombre old fashioned halls of his ancestral mansion, would have been no better than being buried alive. Madrid was the only place for one who aspired to shine as the fine gentleman of wit and fortune, and to Madrid hurried the hopeful Don Ambrosio Salsereta. With the dashing spirit that characterized him, he took a short cut to the object of his ambition, and made his debut in the fashionable world with becoming magnificence. Whose was the gayest livery, and the most spirited pair and the costliest coach on the Prado? Why whose could it be but the newly arrived Don Ambrosio, the happy heir of a lordly store of ducats, who had come to Madrid to breathe the atmosphere of the court, and spend his fortune as became an elegant gentleman. As a matter of course he became a connoisseur in fine women as well as fine equipages, and also accomplished himself in the art of losing gracefully at the card table, an art in which he made a handsome progress, while a student at Salamanca. Things went on thus swimmingly for some time, till one day his *contador*, or steward, hinted that his treasury was on the wane, and suggested with becoming delicacy the propriety of selling some of his estates. A *contador*, by the way, is in Spain an indispensable appendage to a man of fortune or fashion, who occupied with the more agreeable amusement of spending money, would consider it a degradation to perplex himself with the dull and vexatious care of gathering it in. The Spanish *contador*, is a person usually in not much better odour for probity and principle, than the *Alguazil* or the *Escribano*, and while he ministers to the extravagance of his employer, usually takes care to realize the familiar adage, '*quien el accite mesura las manos se unta.*' He who measures

oil, anoints his fingers with it. Whether the *contador* of Don Ambrosio was an exception to the character of his tribe or not, the heedless profligacy of his master was quite sufficient to account for the rapid disappearance of his patrimonial ducats, which, to make a long story short, were soon utterly spent on horses, women, and at play—that railroad to ruin.

It was probably a great surprise to the dashing Don Ambrosio, to find his fingers so soon at the bottom of his purse, and groping about in its empty meshes without finding so much as a *maravedi*. Doubtless he had some twinges of conscience, and may have even railed at himself a little for having played the man of spirit and fashion with such unexampled cleverness and success. But these seeds of repentance being sown on stony ground, were soon devoured by the hungry passion that had now taken unlimited possession of his heart. Having begun to play as the fine gentleman, he continued it as the gambler by profession. As he had gone to school to that shrewd mistress experience, and felt his wits additionally sharpened by the fruitful ‘mother of invention,’ he probably found this for a time a tolerable resource with the unwary. Indeed I once fell in with one of his countrymen, who, having got into his clutches, had taken a lesson in circumspection to the tune of a pocket full of ducats. But as talent is sure to be sooner or later appreciated by the discerning public, the Madrilenians became at last so well convinced of Don Ambrosio’s genius and dexterity, that they modestly shrank from competition with him; so that this ambitious Alexander of the card table and dice box, grew tired of the scenes of his victories, and sighed for new worlds to conquer. With the perseverance of the worthy Cristoval Colon, he made voyages of discovery to the provincial towns and cities, staying long enough in each to enable the innocent natives to form a proper estimate of his abilities, and then extending his researches elsewhere. With this praiseworthy motive he had probably come to Zaragoza, and had timed his arrival at that opportune season, when the approaching celebration of the Virgin of the Pillar attracted crowds of curious strangers and country gentry to the battered capital of Aragon.

Had I been able to read the story of Don Ambrosio’s life by intuition, I should of course have preferred the solitude of the gloomiest room of that desolate mansion, to the worshipful society of a veteran gambler. But as these facts only came to my knowledge from a foreign source, the anxious reader must

be content to leave me for a day or two domesticated in the very same apartment with this faded fine gentleman and gray-headed sinner.

Very soon after my arrival at Zaragoza, I became acquainted with a young scion of the law, one Don Amadeo Calderon, who to a gay disposition, a tolerable share of legal lore, and those man-of-the-world qualities which are characteristic of his profession, added an ardent love of liberty and a generous sorrow for the fallen fortunes of his country. In this last respect he was like almost all young Spaniards in the middling walks of life, of educated and thinking minds. These form the most respectable portion of the nation, elevated as they are by education above the benighted peasantry, and superior in all but wealth and lordly lineage to the degenerate and besotted nobility. But unfortunately those two great component parts of the Spanish population, they who are too ignorant to know the cause of their own misery, and those who are wedded to despotism by the fear of having their titles and estates snatched from them by the equalizing hand of revolution, so far outnumber the disheartened friends of freedom, that these can do no more than indulge in secret execrations and unavailing regrets. Patience or the scaffold is the sorrowful alternative.

Don Amadeo coming one afternoon to smoke his cigarillo with me, opened my eyes to the character and accomplishments of the worthy Don Ambrosio Salsereta. He was in truth the person whom I have already mentioned, as having once emptied his pockets to this Corypheus of the card table. Don Ambrosio, not perhaps supposing that the unceremonious flight of a few score of ducats from Don Amadeo's purse to his own, could have awakened any suspicion in the lawyer's mind, had that very morning applied to him for a loan of money. It seems that the old worthy had been outwitted in his own trade, by certain sharpers, who kept a thriving '*monte*' table in a very private and genteel way at Zaragoza, and of which the head magician was a black-eyed dame of winning manners and agreeable person. Hither had hied the self-confident Don Ambrosio, little thinking, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek in the play, that he should find this deceptive Viola as 'cunning in fence' as himself. But he paid dear for his temerity; for they stripped him, doubloon by doubloon, down to the last piece in his purse, and thus the hapless gamester realized but too bitterly the old Spanish saw, of coming for wool and going away shorn.

As Don Amadeo was quite contented with the contribution he had already made to Don Ambrosio's purse, he found some plausible pretext for declining the loan, and now cautioned me against this cavalier of industry. Moreover, as I was as anxious to get out of the desolate wo-begone tavern, as a mouse to get out of a trap, he suggested that I might find more agreeable quarters in the house where he was himself domesticated, and took me to see his landlord. This was a little *Sastre*, or tailor, who lived in the street of the Packsaddle, near the Place of the Market. By much industry and thrift, he had come to a moderate competence, whereby he was enabled to take upon his shoulders the rent of a tolerable house; and here, while he plied the needle and shears in the little shop below, his wife, a stirring body, turned a penny above stairs by taking lodgers. Her rooms had usually been occupied by such young literary pilgrims, as came to worship at the antiquated shrines of Latin and Metaphysics, in the university of Zaragoza. But as these were now bolted and barred by the jealousy of the absolute king, the wife of the *Sastre* was fain to receive any other strangers who offered.

I found my future host, Senor Casimiro Retazo, a pale-faced little man, whose figure wanted the stout-legged, sturdy proportions of the Aragones, and had doubtless been wasted by the sedentary confinement of his calling. But though the outward man seemed broken down by too diligent attention to the goose and needle, it had not affected his moral constitution; for he overflowed with good nature, and was one of the most civil, laughter-loving little men one could 'see of a summer's day.' His shop was not a very spacious one, and seemed built on the same proportions as its occupant. It was hung round with jackets, cloaks, and breeches, in various stages of progress; while for ornament's sake were stuck up here and there, some dusty engravings of the bull-fight, and also a table almanac, on which were set forth the days of the various saints, with a statement of the religious observances to be kept at certain times, and the indulgences to be thereby obtained.

Senor Casimiro welcomed Don Amadeo's return with much heartiness, and rising from his stool, placed himself, house and household, at the disposition of the stranger cavalier, in the due form of Spanish politeness. Being informed of my errand, he called in his wife as assistant counsel in the case, or rather turned over the whole matter to her superior discretion. Dona Casera accordingly led me up a narrow antiquat-

ed staircase, whose strange turnings and windings spoke volumes for the ingenuity of the architect, who seemed to have exhausted his craft in setting convenience and order at defiance. We at length arrived, after a very dark and round-about journey, to the second story, where the hostess ushered me into a snug little apartment, which had quite an air of comfort when compared with my desolate chamber at the inn. It was garnished with a goodly store of rush-bottomed chairs and quaint chests of drawers. Two or three saints smiled in coarse wood cuts from their cunningly carved frames, and the miniature corpse of Saint Catharine, done in wax-work, with her nun's smock, her rosary and rope girdle, and a crucifix on her bosom, quietly reposed beneath a glass case on the cupboard. I liked the looks both of my landlady and the room; and when she bolstered these good impressions by the promise of a decent dinner, consisting of a soup, a *puchero* with its manifold representatives from the animal and vegetable creation, and a supplementary hare or partridge, I closed at once with her proposition, and assured her I should come that very afternoon—*cayga que cayga*.*

I had no reason to regret my change of domicil or company. In truth I personally became acquainted with all the inmates of the house, from top to bottom, down to a quiet, meditative little ass, who was lodged in the Moorish fashion in a stable quite underground, and beneath the kitchen of Dona Casera. This meek and unassuming little beast had rather a sinecure office, being only led forth twice a day by the kitchen maid, a strapping black-eyed Aragoneza, with three or four long earthen jars set in a wooden frame on his back, to bring water from a fountain near the Ebro. During the rest of the day, secure from the flies and heat, the Capitan or Captain, for such was his name, stood demurely in his stable, looking as grave as Archimedes in his study, or Diogenes in his tub. These subterranean quarters he shared with a tall, high-blooded charger, beneath whose belly he might have walked without touching his ears, and who every morning bore his master, a cavalry-colonel, gaily forth to muster or parade. Whether the diminutive and humble Captain felt his inferiority in rank and size to the colonel's charger, or whether nature had given the horse and the ass but little sympathy, certain it was that there was no sociability between the ill-paired fellow lodgers. The

* An idiomatic expression equivalent to Macbeth's 'come what come may.'

horse ate his barley in selfish solitude at one end of the dark chamber, and Capitan at the other munched his stingy pittance of refuse greens, envying, perchance, if envy could enter the head of an ass, the more luxurious repast of his favored companion.

WALLER TO HIS MISTRESS.

[BY KENNETH QUIVORLEY.]

["There be those who say, that despite of the many verses which he wrote about this time to the Lady Dorothea Sidney, (his *Sacharissa*;) his wit was frequently not forthcoming, when most in quest; and that it was well for Mr. Waller that his marriage with Mrs. Banks, the great heiress of the city, who left him a rich widower at twenty-five, prevented the poet from realizing, as he might else have done, how much he who liveth by his wits is dependent not only upon his own humors, but those of others for his bread.—*Memoirs of the Court of Charles II.*]

I'll try no more—'tis all in vain
To rack for wit my head,
While every chamber of my brain
By thee is tenanted.
Thoughts will not come—words will not flow
Except when thus toward thee they go.

Oh! thou wert born to be my blight,
My bane upon this earth—
Fate did my doom that moment write
In which those eyes had birth.
'Tis strange that aught so good, so pure,
Should work the evil I endure.

Thou darkenest each hope that flings
O'er life one sunny ray;
And to each joy thou lendest wings
To take itself away.
Yet hope and joy—oh what to me
Are they, unless they spring from thee.

I'll try no more—'tis all in vain
To rack for wit my head,
While every chamber of my brain
By thee is tenanted.
Thoughts will not come—words will not flow
Except when thus toward thee they go.